

Senate Regulatory Reform Committee

SB579/HB4688

June 5, 2014

Good afternoon and thank you for allowing me to express my opinion about the bill seeking to de-license registered dietitians and nutritionists in Michigan.

I'm Carol Zinser, here as current President of the Southeastern Michigan Dietetic Association, representing 250 registered dietitian nutritionists in the Detroit metro area. Mr. Chairman, I know that my predecessor, Joanne Sycko, met with you last fall and explained multiple reasons why you and your committee should oppose this bill. I trust that all committee members will be voting with the full knowledge you gained at that meeting, so I'll avoid redundancy with specifics about my profession's credentialing process.

I've been a registered dietitian for over 30 years, worked at Detroit Medical Center and Henry Ford Hospital, and more recently educated future dietitians at Madonna University. My role at present is purely volunteer. Leading my professional organization is a chance to give back to what I believe in so strongly. I personally stand to gain nothing from your yes or no votes today, as I am not employed and know where to obtain sound nutrition advice.

Those who stand to gain most from your **NO** votes are the citizens of our state: your friends, family and neighbors, who don't have that knowledge. At a time when a plethora of information and misinformation is at an all-time via modern media, it is crucially important the public be assured that when obtaining medical nutrition advice, they are doing so from a qualified, LICENSED source who can safely tailor the advice for their individual needs. Obviously, I firmly believe that registered dietitians/registered dietitian nutritionists are the health professional best qualified to provide that advice to individuals both in wellness and sickness. My single opinion is supported by many, including the Michigan State Medical Society, representing our state's physicians. They have our good health as their primary interest. Do you? I hope so.

I understand there is economic cost tied to this, but can't think of any better place to spend money than in ensuring the health, safety and well being of people. Without it, not much else matters. Long term, good health translates simply to lower health care costs. Please, please, please, think in the big picture. Support better health quality and less money spent to achieve it. Allow our citizens to discern where to obtain the nutrition component of their medical care from a legitimate source, through licensure. We count on licensed individuals to provide a variety of services, including elsewhere within the medical field. Nutrition advice should be no exception. Vote NO on SB579/HB4688.

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